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Twelve Sermons,

Written

By the Rev. Dr. John Trusler, K

On the following Subjects:

1. On the Sense of Hearing.
2. On the Gift of Sight.
3. On the Gift of Speech.
4. On the Formation of Man
5. On Reason.
6. On the Formation of the Earth.
7. On the Passions.
8. On Cruelty to Animals.
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No. 1. *On the Sense of Hearing.*

"Proverbs 20. ver. 12." *The hearing Ear, and the seeing Eye, the Lord hath made even both of them."*

The Author of nature having in his wisdom created the earth, and all things therein, and, as we are told in scripture, adapted every thing he made to the use and comfort of those he designed them for:---last of all, created Man, as Lord of this great work. To Him was every perfection given, and having ordained him to live a certain number of years upon the earth, that he might increase and multiply his species; to extend that life he gave him, He taught him to lengthen it out by food: and to enable him to seek and procure that food, He endowed him with five senses; he gave him an Eye to see, a Ear to hear, a Hand to touch, a Tongue to taste, and a Nose to smell; and that his daily task of supplying the wants of nature, and prolonging his life, might not be irksome and unpleasant, He added such exquisite pleasure in the gratification of these senses, as to make him covet what was essential to his being: thus He ordained that beauty should attract the eye, harmonious sounds the ear; that delicacies should enrapture the taste, perfumes regale the smell, and possession gratify the touch; so that the man of exquisite sensation, in the full enjoyment of his senses, is in a state of extatic rapture, and nothing can allay his bliss, but the abuse and imperfection of these faculties.

It is my design to treat of the two principal of these senses, in their turn, those of Hearing and Seeing; to shew the blessings that ac-

company them and the wretchedneſs attendant on the want of them. In doing this we ſhall have abundant cauſe to glorify our Maker, and it will only remain to ſhew you, how to make a proper uſe of such His gifts.

We will begin then with the ſenſe of Hearing.

When we contemplate this wonderful faculty, we muſt stand amazed at the wiſdom of Providence, from whoſe contrivance we are taught philoſophy. Were I to repreſent to you the manner in which ſound is brought about; were I to lay open to your view the formation of the ear, and explain to you its mechaniſm ſo wonderfully conſtructed, and ſo admirably adapted to the purpoſes of hearing; were I to ſhew you that He created even the air, proportionate to this deſign, it being through this medium that the ſurpriſing end is brought about; were I to make you acquainted with the nature of ſound, the cauſe of the echo and the variety of tones, you would naturally cry out with the Pſalmist, "Lord how manifold is Thy goodneſs!" "What is Man, that Thou art ſo mindful of him, and the ſon of man that Thou ſo regardeſt him?"

I ſhall paſs over all this, as being fitter for the ſchools than for the pulpit. I ſhall only obſerve, that as our Creator has formed the ear ſo admirably for the purpoſe of hearing, He has provided us with two, that we may hear the better on all sides, and has guarded their entrance by a bitter ſubſtance, called the Wax, naueous to all kind of inſects that creep into holes, and who might otherwiſe lodge themſelves there and obſtruct our hearing.

We will now proceed to the pleaſures and advantages ariſing from the act of hearing. How pleaſing and inſtructive are ſounds to the man of studious application!--If the deafening torrent tumbling

down the craggy cliff; if the roaring wind, the rattling ſtorm and terrifick thunder alarm and call his attention; it leads him to guard againſt the impending danger, and the grand and awful ſound raiſes his thoughts to his great Creator and forces him, to acknowledge and to own the God. But, in the more placid ſcenes, can man liſten to the voice of animated nature and not feel his ſoul warmed with the ſublimity of goodneſs? Can he hear the whiſpers of the breezes, the murmurs of the groves, the tinkling of the rills, the gurgling of the brooks, the rippling of the currents, the loving of the herds, and the bleatings of the flocks,---and not praiſe the Creator, who in ſuch intereſting ſounds has ſhewn a love for harmony and concord?--Can he be senſible of the variety of Song, in the feathered choir? Can he hear the twittering of the ſwallow, the carrols of the lark, the warblings of the nightingale, the pipings of the bullfinch, the whiſtling of the blackbird and the ſong of the Thruſh, and not be charmed with their melody, ravished with their music and become all piety and all love? A man surely can have no ſoul that is not enraptured with ſuch melody; and let it even be ruffled by the cares and inquietudes of life, it muſt ſoften and ſoothe him into complaſence. So much has the Deity directed his attention to the Soul of man, that he has been ſtudious in the formation of Sounds, and given him certain tones to expreſs certain paſſions of the Soul, and thus communicate his wants. Fear, Grief, Pain, Anger and every paſſion hath its peculiar ſound.--- The alarming ſhriek, the heart-felt ſob, the broken accent, the plaintive sigh, the diſmal groan and the impaſſioned voice, all ſpeak a different language; all meet with comfort in the ſympathiſing friend. The Ear is made the recipient of theſe ſounds, and has power of conveying them to the heart. The man of ſorrow is ſoothed by the tender

voice of her who is the partner of his troubles; she shares in every pang, her eyes are open to his distress; with tears in her eye and pity in her voice, she disperses by plaintive accents her husband's sufferings. Even the ship-wrecked mariner wants not language to convey his hapless fate to a foreign coast; the gun of distress will announce his calamity and inform the ear, within reach, of its complaint. By sound we know the heart of man, we read its wants and share its interests. To what an unbounded length of profitable learning doth it extend? The heart is readily depicted by this active principle, that leads home, through the ear, to the recesses of the breast, and convicts the hearer of his sin. His secret thoughts are thus drawn forth, and Conscience, that faithful monitor, resigns him at the bar of justice. We see his faults, we read his conviction, and anticipate his reform. Thus does the power of sound bring about a reconciliation and attach men once more to each other; it is of course a conciliating principle that partakes of harmony and love; it is a happy provision of Providence to tie mankind together, and bring about the end He has in view, that of uniting them in brotherly affection.

We will now, for a moment, consider the effects of Music upon the ear; that combination of harmonious sounds that carry rapture to the soul. We are taught to believe that heavenly songs and the music of the spheres constitute part of that celestial bliss which the Angels enjoy in Heaven; "when the morning stars sing for joy," and all the host of Angels tune their melodious throats, to usher in the new-born day. If it has pleased God, in the diversity of his abundant gifts, to suffer man to participate in those pleasures which are the continued joys of Heaven; if the powers of Music are divine, and that divinity is communicated to man, how grateful ought he to be to that God, who

enables his creatures to partake of it!---Happy is the choice of music thus applied;---happy is the man who, by a proper application of this divine ſcience, can attune his ſoul to Heaven, join with Choral Worſhip to praiſe the Great Firſt Cauſe of all things, and mingle his lays with Cherubs and with Seraphs; who can forget his cares in celeſtial harmony, and loſe the man in the adoration of his God!--He who is not charmed with music, has a ſoul only fit for treaſons.

That Music acts upon our paſsions and reaches home to the Soul, is evident to all who have been preſent, where a number of voices and inſtruments combined, have poured forth their harmony in celeſtial ſounds, in praiſing the God of nature and the author of harmony. Senſible of this, the moſt enlightened of men have encouraged music; nay, have introduced it into worſhip.

Let us next conſider the diſadvantages attendant on the want of hearing; tho' theſe are manifeſt from the bleſsings that accompany it: for not to share thoſe bleſsings which others enjoy, is doubtleſs a ſource of continued miſery. Without this faculty, man would be far from happy: for, independent of the loſs of ſpeech, it would be no ſmall deprivation of happineſs, to want the enjoyments that proceed from rapturous ſounds, and the oral communication of friendly intercourſe. That want of ſpeech is the conſequence of want of hearing, experiences teaches; for ſpeech being learnt by imitation, if we cannot hear the voice of others, we cannot imitate it; of courſe, thoſe who are born deaf are alſo dumb.---How dire is ſuch a misfortune and how much to be lamented! The man who is both deaf and dumb ſtands, as it were, alone in life, joyleſs and unpartaking of that communicative bliſs which ſprings from reading the thoughts and anticipating the wiſhes of his friend. This indeed may be gathered

by a long intercourse with men and studying their conduct; but he whose ears are open, knows it in some measure intuitively; he catches the manners of men as they rise, reads them without study, and, like two strung instruments, tuned in unison, vibrates together; strike the one, and you sound the other.---The ideas of a man under such a calamity must remain inactive, within his own breast; possessing no means of communicating them to others, he lives as it were, in the world, without the benefit of friendly society; his wants can only be supplied by himself, having no alternative to resort to, but that of attending to the calls of nature.---In vain would he apply by signs and gestures to his friends and relations, in the hour of sickness, or a perturbed imagination:---This want of hearing would place him below the brute creation, which are taught by instinct, tho' in sounds unintelligible to man, to communicate their wants and wishes to each other. He might sigh and weep, and wet his pillow with his tears unnoticed, but by the eye of his surrounding friends.

When under this idea, we consider the blessings it diffuses to mankind and the exquisite charms it renders us partakers of; we must, as rational creatures, adore and thank that beneficent Being, who hath been graciously pleased to bestow such a gift on each of us, and deplore the wretchedness of such as are deprived of it. What must be the secret comfort and pleasure of him, who has an opportunity of diverting and lessening his sorrows, by communicating his distress to him who will take part in his afflictions, and whose compassionate heart leads him to sympathize with man?---What must be the happiness of him, who goes forth in the morning to his work and to his labour, to behold the rising Sun, animating the whole bosom of nature, whilst the warblers of the air swell their carrol throats, enlivening

the day, exhilerating the ſpirits and cheering the heart? As the proſpect before him ſpeaks rapture to his Eye, ſo does the voice of animated nature paint its beauties to his Ear.

I will now proceed to ſhew you the proper uſe we ſhould make of this faculty of Hearing.

The gift of Hearing being given then as a Bleſſing to man, the inference we ſhould draw from it, is to enjoy this bleſsing, and not pervert or proſtitute the uſe of it; ſuch conduct would not only render us enemies to God, but enemies to ourſelves. If we offend our Creator (it being the Lord who giveth, and the Lord who taketh away) he may, as he hath done, ſuddenly deprive us of the uſe of it. We have many inſtances in life of thoſe who have had their ſight, their ſpeech, their hearing, and other ſenſes ſuddenly taken from them, as a judgment from Heaven:---Let us be cautious then not to offend the God of Vengeance.

The rapturous enjoyment of a fine ſummer-morning, is a direct reprehenſion to the man of ſloth, who is ſlumbering in his bed, and ſuffering ſuch enjoyment to paſs by him unnoticed. The ſlothful, like the deaf man, is inſenſible to what he loſes; he not only loſes what would daily and abundanty gratify his eyes and ears, but he he loſes half his life.---Was he to calculate the many unneceſſary hours he loſes in his ſleep, he would find them in the common life of man, amount to years. I mention this only as a hint; my next obſervations ſhall be a little cloſer to the ſubject. As according to the old adage, if there were no receivers, there would be no thieves;--So if there were no evil hearers, there would be no evil ſpeakers. The man therefore who lends his ear to an idle and wicked tale, does as much, if not more harm, than he who tells it; and as the laws of every well-

governed country punish the Receiver with the Thief; so does th evil Hearer deserve as much punishment as the evil Speaker; an tho' our laws do not reach so far as this, be assured there is a Judg above, who reads the intentions of the heart, and as a God of justic will punish both offenders.---He suffers the free use of the faculti He gives, but will never countenance the perversion of them.

We may open our ears to the calamities of nature, the sighs of dis tress, the heart-felt accents of grief, the plaints of wretchedness, th moans of affliction, the sobs of a broken heart and the groans of wounded spirit;---We may listen to the advice of a friend and to tale of woe;---but our ears should be shut to the insinuations of th artful, the insididuousness of the crafty, the treachery of the deceitful and the prevarications of the guilty,---to defamation and to lies; i short, our ears should be pure, and our hearing without sin.

Man would be, of all creatures, the most ungrateful to God, was t to forget the care and love of his Creator, so largely manifested in th blessings that result from Hearing; and the greatest enemy to himself if, by a perversion of this faculty, he lost the true enjoyment of i We should open our ears to all that is good, and our hearts to all tha is holy; and when death shall draw a melancholy veil over all th beauties of this world, we shall find ourselves in a state capable of en joying the beatitudes of the Blessed above, and shall be able n only to hear, but to join in those Hallelujahs of the heavenly Choi where the Ear will be all rapture, and the Soul all extacy.

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